



U. S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney
Southern District of Mississippi

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 16, 2008

SIX DEFENDANTS IN CENTRAL, MS AND TWO DEFENDANTS IN LOS ANGELES, CA, CHARGED IN A MULTI KILOGRAM COCAINE DISTRIBUTION CONSPIRACY

13 Search Warrants Executed In Central Mississippi and in Los Angeles, CA

Jackson, MS – U.S. Attorney Dunn Lampton, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Assistant Special Agent in Charge, Joel K. Reece, and Madison County Sheriff Toby Trowbridge announce the culmination of a two year federal investigation targeting a major cocaine organization operating between Central MS and Los Angeles, CA. Members of this organization were responsible for the importation into Mississippi from California of over 100 kilograms of cocaine in the last two years. Of significance is the fact that this criminal organization routinely utilized drug couriers who traveled with kilogram quantities of cocaine aboard commercial airline flights from Los Angeles, CA to Jackson, MS.

On May 13, 2008, teams of state, local, and federal law enforcement officers arrested six defendants and executed seven search warrants at locations in the Jackson, MS metropolitan area. At the same time in a coordinated effort, Special Agents from the DEA Los Angeles Field Division executed six search warrants and arrested seven additional defendants in California. The arrests were the result of a joint investigation between the DEA (in Jackson, MS and Los Angeles, CA) and the Madison County Mississippi Sheriff's Office. As a result of this multi state investigation over fifty kilograms of cocaine, three kilograms of heroin, three pounds of methamphetamine and approximately \$126,000 in United States Currency have been seized. Also seized were thirteen vehicles (three of which had hidden compartments) and numerous firearms. Additional arrests/indictments are anticipated as this investigation continues.

DEA Assistant Special Agent in Charge of Mississippi Joel K. Reece stated, "This investigation and subsequent arrests of these individuals has resulted in the complete dismantlement of a sophisticated drug trafficking organization responsible for the distribution of significant quantities of cocaine into central Mississippi. This success can be attributed to an outstanding partnership between DEA and our state and local

counterparts combined with guidance and aggressive prosecution from the United States Attorneys Office for the Southern District of Mississippi.”

Madison County Sheriff Toby Trowbridge stated, “The Madison County Sheriff’s Department is very proud of the cooperative effort with the DEA and local area law enforcement. This cooperation has ended with the arrests of a suspected group of organized drug traffickers in Madison County and surrounding areas. This is a very significant step into curbing drugs in Madison County and we will continue these efforts.”

If convicted of the charges in the indictment, the defendants face a mandatory minimum sentence of ten years and a maximum sentence of life imprisonment.

The government’s case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Sandra G. Moses and Darren J. LaMarca.

The Defendants:

Arlandia Fleming
Age: 34
Jackson, MS

Shun Fleming
Age: 32
Ridgeland, MS

Rodney Horne
Age: 28
Jackson, MS

Berty Rodriguez
Age: 27
Los Angeles, CA

Ed Stallworth
Age: 32
Los Angeles, CA

Kendreal Thompson
Age: 27
Jackson, MS

Jerome Wellington
Age: 32
Ridgeland, MS

Charles Taylor
Age: 39
Jackson, MS

Other agencies participating in this investigation include the Gulf Coast High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Major Investigations Team (which includes officers and agents from the Hinds County Sheriff's Office, the Jackson Police Department, the Madison Police Department, the Rankin County Sheriff's Office, the Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics, the Mississippi Highway Patrol, United Marshal Service, and the Internal Revenue Service). Also assisting in the investigation was the Ridgeland Police Department.

As in any criminal case, a person is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty. The charges filed merely contain allegations of criminal conduct.

For further information, please contact DEA Assistant Special Agent in Charge Joel K. Reece at 601-965-4400, or Madison County Sheriff Toby Trowbridge at 601-855-0737.

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